DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 217 014 SP 020 227

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TITLE What Do We Know About What We Do: Equity and Curriculum Research.
PUB DATE Apr 82
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (Houston, TX, April 22-27, 1982).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Civil Rights Legislation; *Curriculum Development; *Curriculum Research; Educational Legislation; *Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; *Equal Education; Federal Programs; Individualized Education Programs; Multicultural Education; Physical Disabilities; *Physical Education; *Program Effectiveness; Sex Stereotypes

ABSTRACT

The enactment of educational equity legislation, such as the Women's Equity Act of 1974 and the Education for all Children Act of 1974 (Public Law 94-142), has resulted in increased funding for education program development, but little hard data has been collected to prove program effectiveness. A review of research literature indicates that not enough research is being done on issues surrounding equity for minorities, curriculum questions in physical education, and sex role stereotyping in physical education. Many programs have a short term inservice workshop format that produces a narrow data base and does not allow for the examination of significant differences or long term change. Three widely used federally funded programs can be cited that have collected data to support their claims in effective pupil behavior change. The first is Every Child a Winner, an individualized movement education program for rural schools that began in 1970 as Project Hope. The second program, Physical Opportunity Program for Exceptional Learners (PEOPEL), is for junior and high school students with special needs and uses peer tutors and task analysis to achieve gains in fitness and attitude change. Both programs are disseminated through the National Diffusion Network. In Project ACTIVE (All Children Totally Involved Via Equity), sex equity in elementary physical education is addressed through specific attention to sex role stereotyping in physical activities. Future programs should connect curricular theory to planning, implementing, and evaluating objectives and should be accessible to the public. (FG)

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What Do We Know About What We Do: Equity and Curriculum Research

In order to describe what we know about curriculum research in the area of educational equity, it is necessary to define the parameters within which the research was reviewed. Equity for our purposes today encompasses what is being done to ensure equal treatment regardless of race, sex, or physical handicap. It is no accident that these three foci are also those that federal, state and local governments have identified within our educational systems as historically, the reason for providing unequal opportunities. In an attempt to legislate educational equity, Congress has given us Title VI and Title IX as well as Public Law 94-142 and section 504. It has been up to the schools of this country, with the aid of GRANTS - that rapidly endangered wonder equalizer - to develop, implement, and evaluate curricula which provide equal access and options for all individuals.

At this point, I feel it necessary to focus on the federal government's role in achieving equity and the dearth of research available to tell us what we know. The title programs of the 1965 Educational Amendments Act provided substantial funding for program development for minorities and special need groups. Title IX and the Women's Educational Equity Act of 1974 established funding for programs for women and girls. Public Law 94-142, the rehabilitation act and Public Law 90-170 have generated funds for programs for the handicapped. Until recently, there have been extensive funds available to develop programs for work with minorities, women and exceptional individuals. Unfortunately, most of this money required little research and allowed lots of development.

Presented in Houston, Texas
AAHPERD National Convention:
Curriculum and Instruction
Academy Session, April, 1982

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SP 020 827

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The outcome being a variety of programs designed to increase equity for all and little hard data to support the contention that this does happen.

For example, in a recent publication which reviewed 34 personnel preparation projects for work with the handicapped (Clelland, 1979) twelve were cited which used research designs to collect client change data. Of the twelve all but one used the one group pretest/posttest design. The exception utilized a control group time series design. The 1982 report "Educational Equity: A Continuing Quest" published by the National Advisory Council on Programs for Women informs us that a joint project is under way to publish a synthesis of the evidence of activities which work in achieving sex equity.

The programs available for review generally have two specific populations which they address: women and girls in educational programs and handicapped individuals. Very little has been done recently to examine the issues surrounding equity for minorities. A number of the programs developed to focus gender questions include ethnic women as target populations. However, very few, if any, are concerned with curricular questions in physical education.

There have been a few programs which look at sex role stereotyping in physical education. The thrust in programs for work with the handicapped has had its main emphasis in preservice and inservice activities for professional personnel, rather than in school curricula directed toward equal access and the least restrictive environment. Two further examples will highlight the problem of finding programs to examine. The National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs 1982 report lists over 450 products produced between 1976 and 1980. Out of this total, 15 were developed to address equity in physical education and athletics and ten of these focused on athletics. In the 1979 report of projects funded under the Women's Educational Equity Act, of the over 30 projects listed for funding, five are in the area of physical education and health. Of these five, one is a health education

program and the other four address physical education. All of those directed at physical education programs were concerned with workshop activities and materials or handbook generation. None indicated a means to assess impact of the program.

A further delimitation that we all must recognize is the time lag between funding, development, implementation, and evaluation of program effects. In the case of federal projects three years can elapse between funding and implementation. In the case of personnel preparation projects, which make up the majority of the recipients of funding, it may be four years before the first graduates are employed. Those programs which focus on inservice activities, generally, use a one-time workshop approach. This provides a very narrow data base upon which to draw inferences about what we know. It may appear that the point has been belabored, but it is important to realize that many of the programs available, although well planned and developed, do not include a research design which supports or refutes the claims for making a significant difference or causing change over time. This is not an indictment of the programs. It is a statement of fact. For in reality when we set out to do "curriculum work" we generally do not work from a data base, but function, hopefully, from a sound theoretical framework. The error has been in not taking the next step and empirically testing assumptions beyond a one-time only measure that does not account for change over time.

Now that I have convinced you that all we know is that we know nothing, I'd like to describe three programs that in fact have data to support their claims. Or in other words, I'd like to give some indication of what we do know about physical education curricula which focus on alleviating problems associated with sex role stereotyping and restrictive environments for handicapped students.

I have focused my review on federally funded projects for two reasons. One, these are the most visible and accessible. Second, a review of the literature in physical education which included Quest, The Research Quarterly, Proceedings from NAPEHE and joint NAPECW/NCPEAM meetings, back to 1969 yielded little information regarding research efforts intended to determine the impact of particular curricular approaches in achieving equity.

The three projects selected for discussion were chosen because each exemplifies utilization of a specific programmatic approach and content. Each has demonstrated change in pupil behavior. And, finally, each has had an impact beyond a single school setting. Two of the three programs have been nationally validated by the Department of Education for dissemination through the National Diffusion Network.

Every Child A Winner with Movement Education provides an individualized movement education program directed at success experiences for all children regardless of physical or mental ability. The programs evidence of effectiveness was demonstrated over a three year period using random samples of students in grades 1 through 6. Pre and post tests included the Washington State Fitness Test, AAHPER Fitness Test, Minnesota Motor Skills Test and a measure of reading and math. Data indicated student improvement in all areas with fitness and motor skill results significant at the .05 level.

Every Child A Winner was designed to develop physical education programs for rural schools. The primary focus was to utilize movement education techniques to develop fundamental motor skills. Lessons are sequentially organized so that individuals move to more difficult levels at their own pace. The emphasis is on individual progress rather than competition or group goals.

Every Child A Winner began in 1970 as Project Hope with Title III ESEA support and has been implemented in a variety of schools across the country.

It is one of the few physical education programs qualifying for national support and dissemination through the National Diffision Network. What do we know about what is being done? The individualized approach through movement education can achieve results in developing fitness and motor skills. We also know that this is the type of program that has great appeal to practitioners throughout the country as evidenced by the project's adoption nationwide.

PEOPEL-Physical Education Opportunity Program for Exceptional Learners-had its origin in Phoenix, Arizona. The project began in 1974 as a Title IV-C activity and was nationally validated in 1979 for dissemination through the National Diffusion Network. PEOPEL is an activity based program for high school and junior high school age students with special needs. The unique feature is its use of peer-tutors or student aides to carry out instruction. It is designed as an individualized alternative to general or adaptive physical education.

Evidence of the effectiveness of the program was collected over a three year period using a pre and post test with control group design. The measures used were a composite physical fitness test battery and Wear's Physical Education Attitude Scale. Significant gains in fitness and attitude change were found at the .05 level.

The PEOPEL curriculum encompasses thirty five units of instructions utilizing task analyzed performance objectives. It is designed for students who because of their special needs do not benefit from the general physical education program. What do we know? Alternative teaching styles coupled with task analysis can provide an effective program of instruction for students with specific needs.

The final project addresses sex equity in elementary physical education. Project ACTIVE-All Children Totally Involved Via Equity was developed as a

cooperative venture between staff at Western Washington University and Seattle and Bellingham School District's personnel. It was supported by the Women's Educational Equity Act.

ACTIVE is based on a movement education approach; but focuses very definitely on teacher awareness of and strategies for dealing with sex stereotyping. The project introduces new activities and new approaches to traditional games and sports aimed at eliminating situations which have traditionally established stereotypic behaviors. The underlying premise is to give children the responsibility for much of their activity. This allows the teacher to circulate and observe while interacting with individuals or small groups. A variety of checklists and observation materials have been provided to analyze attitudes and behaviors of teacher and students toward stereotyping.

Data collected on children's interest in particular activities using project participants and a control group demonstrated that interest increased for participants and decreased slightly for the control children. Both boys and girls demonstrated increased interest in activities typed for the opposite six. The administration of the instrument to measure sex-typing of activities to a second group in another state using ACTIVE indicated a decrease in sex typing from pre to post instruction.

What do we know? Careful planning and specific attention to behaviors which have traditionally reinforced sex role stereotyping can aid in eliminating attitudes that particular sports and games are gender specific.

Summary

What do we know about what we do with respect to the provision of curricular frameworks, theories and models which achieve equity? Quite frankly, we know little or nothing. The programs reviewed have demonstrated that a movement education or activity centered approach can have an impact. However,

when one reviews the programs and research projects available, one is hard pressed to identify a statement or claim within any of them that a specific curricular theory has been used in their planning, implementation and evaluation. What do we know about what we do? If the preceeding is any indication, it is time we got the word out that we are doing curriculum work. And it is time to become actively involved in projects which are easily accessible and visible to our public.